

# CREW Cuts

The Monthly Newsletter of CREW

October 2010 // Issue No. 42

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## Spotlight

### CREW Calls for Criminal Investigation of O'Donnell



We're facing some tough economic times, but Delaware candidate for Senate Christine O'Donnell seems to have found an illegal way to solve her long term unemployment problem: run for office and steal her campaign money!

This month, we exposed Ms. O'Donnell for the crook she is and called for a criminal investigation. CREW also filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The facts in the case against Ms. O'Donnell suggest she committed three crimes: 1) she embezzled her campaign funds to support herself (she hasn't held a steady job in years); 2) she made false statements by lying about her expenditures on forms she submitted to the FEC; and 3) she likely committed tax evasion by failing to declare any of the campaign funds she used to live on as income.

While Ms. O'Donnell isn't talking, her lawyer, Republican insider Clela Mitchell, has threatened to sue CREW for libel. Apparently, she's forgotten that truth is a defense to such a case.

[Click here to read Melanie Sloan's op-ed in the \*Wilmington News Journal\*.](#)

[Click here to sign our petition calling for a criminal investigation into Ms. O'Donnell.](#)

[Click here to help CREW fight off any ridiculous lawsuits filed by Christine O'Donnell.](#)



## CREW Calls for Commonsense Earmark Reform



Last week, CREW joined a coalition of fellow good-government groups and lobbyists from both sides of the political aisle, announcing new earmark reform principles that would reduce the disproportionate influence of special interests and save taxpayer money.

Over the past few years, members on both sides of the aisle have engaged in one-upmanship over this hot-button political issue, failing to come up with a long-term workable solution. The coalition has been promoting specific pragmatic reforms in meetings with Congress. If lobbyists and good government can find common ground and agree on reform principles, Congress should be able to do the same.

[Learn more.](#)

[Read more about the five principles.](#) (.pdf)

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## David Vitter: He's Baaack!



Just in time for Halloween we have a perennial scandal-ridden politician who just won't go away, no matter how many ethics violations he commits: David Vitter.

We have filed a complaint with the Senate Ethics Committee against the ethically challenged junior senator from Louisiana after we realized that he had used taxpayer funds to fly one of his staffers (Brent Furer) to the state  to face a judge on a DWI charge  twice!

This is the same Mr. Furer who previously attacked his girlfriend in 2008, while (perversely) handling women's issues for Sen. Vitter. His reprimand? Apparently a three-month paid vacation. Sen. Vitter of course repeatedly lied about Mr. Furer's legislative portfolio, and let this violent criminal keep his job  even after learning of the attack. Mr. Furer only resigned when CREW and *ABC News* exposed his violent behavior much later.

Will the ethics committee take action on CREW's most recent complaint? Stay tuned 

[Learn more.](#)

[Read CREW's complaint to the SEC.](#) (.pdf)

[Read about CREW's complaint in USA Today.](#)

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## CREW Meets with Congressional Black Caucus Foundation after Scholarship Scandal is Exposed



The Congressional Black Caucus has reached out to CREW, looking for advice on how to fix a growing scholarship scandal that has already encompassed two of its members.

Both Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and Sanford Bishop (D-GA) have been caught handing out scholarship money to family members and friends, instead of the needy kids in their district. Ms. Johnson outrageously claimed she diverted the funds because there were no qualified kids in her district!

Melanie Sloan summed it up best on one of her many recent appearances on *CNN's AC360* with Anderson Cooper: "You shouldn't even need a rule - it's pretty clearly wrong to misappropriate money for your kids and grandkids when it's intended for needy kids."

[Watch Melanie Sloan's latest appearance on AC360.](#)

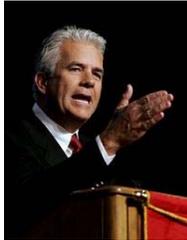
[Read more about the Rep. Bishop scandal.](#)

[Read more about the Rep. Johnson scandal.](#)

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## John Ensign Needs a Mirror



CREW's quote of the month comes from Sen. John Ensign (R-NV):

***"If you don't hold us accountable, we'll do some real bad things in Washington, D.C."***

It's hard to imagine why Sen. Ensign would make such a public statement in light of his conduct. Maybe a guilty conscience? To recap, Sen. Ensign had an affair with a campaign staffer married to his chief of staff, fired them both, and then paid the couple off to keep them quiet. Sen. Ensign's statement leaves us wondering: shouldn't politicians hold themselves to high ethical standards, rather than relying on groups like CREW - and their constituents - to keep them honest?

[Read Melanie Sloan's \*Huffington Post\* piece "Senator Ensign and the Land of Opposites."](#)

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Americans deserve elected officials who focus on our interests rather than their own. Keeping politicians honest and building a better Washington won't be easy, which is why CREW needs your help. Please forward this to your friends and family to help spread the word about the hard work CREW is doing in Washington. Also, be sure to visit our website, [www.citizensforethics.org](http://www.citizensforethics.org) and to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Thank you for your continued support.

Melanie

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